

## **DFL, DFL Foundation and Franz Beckenbauer Foundation support 20 non-profit projects through the “Gute Freunde Förderfonds”**

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With the “Gute Freunde Förderfonds” (Good Friends Support Fund), the Franz Beckenbauer Foundation and the DFL Foundation are pooling their efforts to make it easier—particularly for young people with disabilities—to access sport and physical activity, thereby enabling greater participation. The fund was established in August this year on the occasion of the first Franz Beckenbauer Supercup and endowed with €100,000 by the DFL Deutsche Fußball Liga. From a total of 114 applications submitted by sports clubs, associations, foundations and other non-profit organisations, 20 projects have now been selected for funding.

### **Growing need for inclusive sports programmes**

The demand for inclusive sports programmes and qualified coaches is high. According to the latest Sports Development Report, the number of coaching licences in disability sport has fallen by almost 15 percent over the past five years. The proportion of sports clubs actively engaged with people with disabilities has also recently declined from 25 to 23 percent.

The 114 project applications received by the Franz Beckenbauer Foundation by mid-October for the “Gute Freunde Förderfonds” further underline this need. In selecting the funded projects, consideration was given to the demand for training and qualification measures for coaches, as well as for specialised sports equipment, mobility support and inclusive offers for people with physical or intellectual disabilities.

“The need for low-threshold physical activity opportunities for people with disabilities is high.”

**Heidrun Beckenbauer**, Member of the Board of the Franz Beckenbauer Foundation, said: “The need for low-threshold physical activity opportunities for people with disabilities is high. Our insights into disability sport have clearly shown how diverse forms of sporting participation can emerge once mobility and appropriate aids are ensured. However, many clubs depend on external financial support to create these conditions. It is therefore crucial to work together to remove barriers, strengthen inclusion and, in particular, enable young people with disabilities to access sport. We are delighted for all funded projects and look forward to their implementation with great anticipation.”

**Marc Lenz**, DFL Managing Director and Chair of the Board of Trustees of the DFL Foundation, added:

“The joint initiative launched on the occasion of the first Franz Beckenbauer Supercup supports people with disabilities in movement and participation—and thus fully reflects the long-standing social commitment of Franz Beckenbauer and the Foundation. We are pleased to support numerous projects and to continue this engagement together: the ‘Gute Freunde Förderfonds’ will remain part of the Franz Beckenbauer Supercup in the future.”

**Franziska Fey**, Chair of the Board of the DFL Foundation, said: “The large number and diversity of applications submitted to the ‘Gute Freunde Förderfonds’

show that needs-based support for people with disabilities is important—not only in sport, but also with regard to social participation. Our funding aims to provide concrete impetus for greater inclusion and physical activity in everyday life and to strengthen institutions in their commitment.”

**The following projects will receive funding through the “Gute Freunde Förderfonds”:**

- Association of Friends and Supporters of the Friedrich Fröbel School e.V.: *“Quiet Waves – Swimming for Children with Autism”*
- Eintracht Hattersheim e.V.: *“Inclusive Football Tournament Hattersheim 2026”*
- Hessian Association for Disability and Rehabilitation Sport e.V.: *“Inclusion School Camps 2026”*
- German Deaf Sports Association (DGSV): Qualification programmes for people with hearing impairments
- Turn-Klubb zu Hannover e.V.: Establishment of an inclusive table tennis training group
- SSG Blista Marburg e.V.: Participation in the U19 Goalball Camp Marburg 2026
- TuS Makkabi Rostock: Inclusive foil fencing in Rostock
- Germany Swims Foundation: *“Swimming learning week for blind and multiply disabled children in Hamburg”*
- Duisburg Rowing Club e.V.: Purchase of a para-rowing boat for inclusive rowing
- Canoe Club Hilden e.V.: Inclusive canoeing – instructor training and purchase of communication equipment
- SV 1919 Sonsbeck e.V. – Klimpansen: *“Inclusive Climbing Camp of the Klimpansen 2026”*
- Disability and Rehabilitation Sports Association North Rhine-Westphalia e.V.: *“aktiv dabei Tour 2026”*
- Friends’ Association of the Christy Brown School Duisburg e.V.: Funding of movement and sports equipment for the LVR Christy Brown School
- Disability Sports Association Lower Saxony e.V.: *“Run Your Way – Para Athletics Action Days”*
- Hephata – Hessian Diaconal Centre – Youth Services: Purchase of an accessible trampoline
- 1. FC Köln Foundation: Blind football training camp and purchase of head protection
- Sportfreunde Illerrieden e.V. – Wheelchair Rugby/Rehabilitation Sports Department: Purchase of a rugby wheelchair
- CJD Saxony-Anhalt: Participation in the sports and games festival *“Joy of Movement”*
- TSV Milbertshofen e.V. – Wheelchair Rugby Department: Participation in the Wheelchair Rugby Tournament 2026

- Open-Ocean e.V.: *“Strong Together on Every Wave”*

### **About the foundations**

The **Franz Beckenbauer Foundation** supports people with disabilities as well as individuals who are ill or have fallen into hardship through no fault of their own. The foundation was established in 1982 by Franz Beckenbauer after his professional football career. Until his death on 7 January 2024, the founder himself was actively committed to the organisation’s valuable work. The focus lies on individual assistance, as well as supporting projects of smaller non-profit and charitable organisations in German-speaking countries, provided they align with the foundation’s statutes. The foundation’s work aims to shape an inclusive future and remove barriers to enable social, societal and sporting participation for people with disabilities.

As a foundation rooted in professional football, the **DFL Foundation** has been committed since 2008—together with strong partners and clubs from the Bundesliga and 2. Bundesliga—to the healthy and active development of children and young people, as well as to the active participation of young people in Germany in a diverse and cohesive society. In addition, it supports talents from more than 50 Olympic and Paralympic sports, as well as deaf sport, in their athletic and personal development. With its expertise, network and the reach of professional football, the DFL Foundation aims to ensure that all young people in Germany have the opportunity to realise their potential.